

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, September 29, 1994

Published Since 1877

Zabi and hundreds like him:

Children are why Baptists came to Goma, Zaire

By Craig Bird

GOMA, Zaire (BP) — He didn't have a registration card or a refugee number.

So 10-year-old Nzabirinda John was turned away from the overcrowded orphanage in Goma, Zaire.

It didn't matter that he was naked, malnourished, and alone. It didn't matter that he was dying from exposure, that he hadn't seen his family since the night two months earlier when he was separated from them in the mad scramble of Rwandans across the border to Zaire.

It didn't matter that his friends and family — when he had friends and family — called him "Zabi." No one called him anything in Goma. He was just another nameless, numberless refugee.

But when the team of Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers noticed him huddled against the team van, trying to soak up some reflected heat from the chill morning sun, Zabi became human again.

Pam Conteras, a volunteer nurse from Cleveland, pointed the boy out to missionary Lucy Driggers. Driggers started asking officials at the orphanage about Zabi. The Baptists, all part of the joint Foreign Mission Board-Brotherhood Commission relief effort in Goma, were shocked by the callous victory of bureaucracy over humanity.

"We'll take him, and get him registered later," Driggers declared, shaming the orphanage into giving



CAREFUL EXAM — A head-to-toe medical exam by volunteer Southern Baptist doctor Daniel Brown of Raleigh, N.C., and nurse Pam Conteras of Cleveland found Zabi to be "generally healthy, once we get him warmed up and fed." (BP photos by Kevin Morley)

the boy a shirt and trousers. The Baptist center to care for "unaccompanied minors" had been authorized the day before by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to begin accepting children.

Zabi would be the first of hundreds. By 11 a.m. he was undergoing a medical exam by Daniel Brown, a volunteer physician from Raleigh, N.C.

His body temperature was only 95 degrees. "Imagine what it was at

2 a.m. in the dark and cold and wind," Brown said. "But his spleen is only slightly enlarged, and I think once we get him warmed up and fed up he's going to be a good patient."

The Rwandan Baptist woman hired to care for Zabi and nine other children, hugged the somber boy, assuring him, "We're going to feed you and love you. We're going to play and laugh."

Before the team was through

examining Zabi, a UNICEF van arrived with three more children. Ten minutes later the Baptist van returned with five youngsters who had been living behind a pastor's house. By the end of the week there were 75 children. By the end of September there will be 500.

Five hundred children like Zabi will get food, medical care, and lots of love because Baptists chose to be in Goma.

Bird writes for FMB.



RESCUE — Mississippi Baptist volunteer nurse Pam Conteras (left) noticed the naked boy and rallied other team members to question why he had not been treated. After getting him some clothes, Conteras and other team members consoled Zabi in the van until he could be transported to the new Baptist camp for unaccompanied minors.

Collegians drinking up

College students — especially female students — are bucking the national trend toward decreased alcohol consumption, and that troubles the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission (CLC). Among the findings of a June 7 study by the Commission on Substance Abuse at Colleges and Universities:

— One in three college students drinks primarily to get drunk. 35% of women students said they drink primarily to get drunk, up an eye-popping 250% since 1977.

— 42% of students report they engaged in binge drinking in the last two weeks. 37% of women said they binge drink, almost triple the number 15 years ago.

— 95% of campus violence is alcohol-related. 90% of campus rapes involve alcohol use by the assailant, the victim, or both.

— 60% of women with AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases were drunk when infected through sexual activity.

Hong Kong policy changes

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) are taking actions they hope will ensure the denomination's continued presence in Hong Kong after the Chinese government reclaims the capitalist oasis in 1997. China has already announced plans to significantly increase land taxes and alter land ownership rules, so FMB resources will be adapted accordingly, reported Linda Pearson, FMB area director for East Asia. "We don't have the resources to pay these taxes, so we felt this was the time for... moving our people into apartments. If for some reason after 1997 we're asked to give up our property, we wouldn't have the funds to house all our missionaries.... Once we have this behind us, we'll refocus on... evangelism, planting churches, and ministering to people," she said. There are currently 58 Southern Baptist missionaries working with 45,000 Hong Kong Baptists in 115 churches and chapels. Hong Kong Baptists have set a goal of 200 churches and 100,000 believers by the turn of the century.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Washington Association members come to the rescue of storm-damaged First Church in Belmont, Calif., repairing the ventilation system and replacing plumbing in the baptistry of the small church.

20 years ago

Thirty-five young people from Temple Church, Hattiesburg, return from mission work along the Rio Grande River in south Texas, where 113 people were reached through Bible schools and revivals.

50 years ago

New Zion Church, Tylertown, writes Mississippi Governor Thomas L. Bailey, disapproving his support for a black market liquor tax on the grounds that the new law is confusing and implies government support for legalized liquor.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Mississippi College —
ownership and control

Back in 1850 the college committee made its report: "The Trustees of the Mississippi College, located in Clinton, offer to relinquish to this body (the Convention) property and control of the College, with the one only consideration, that should the Denomination fail to keep up a school upon the property, it reverts back to the trustees. The property is understood to be worth \$11,000."

On Sept. 22, 1994, some 146 years later, the trustees reclaimed the college. The usual language of ensuring the college "remain true to its Baptist heritage,... unwavering in our commitment to serve all Baptists in Mississippi," etc., was included in a statement issued on that day.

The trustees felt it important to "distance the college from denominational politics in order to be assured that the college could continue to thrive....," said the statement.

Thus, for nearly a century and half, the "crown jewel" of Baptist

life was owned and controlled by the Mississippi Baptist Convention. With the stroke of a pen, it is now in the hands of 15 trustees. The four pastors on the board of trustees vehemently opposed the action, but it still passed. The convention is left with a promise of choosing six trustees as the board is enlarged to 24.

What is the reaction to all of this? How much were MC trustees influenced by similar actions at Baylor or Samford? How much were they influenced by SBC politics?

To say the least, most people were stunned. There has been little attempt to "take over" the college by fundamental/conservatives or moderates. Mississippi Baptists have sought to pursue a middle-of-the-road course in the controversy.

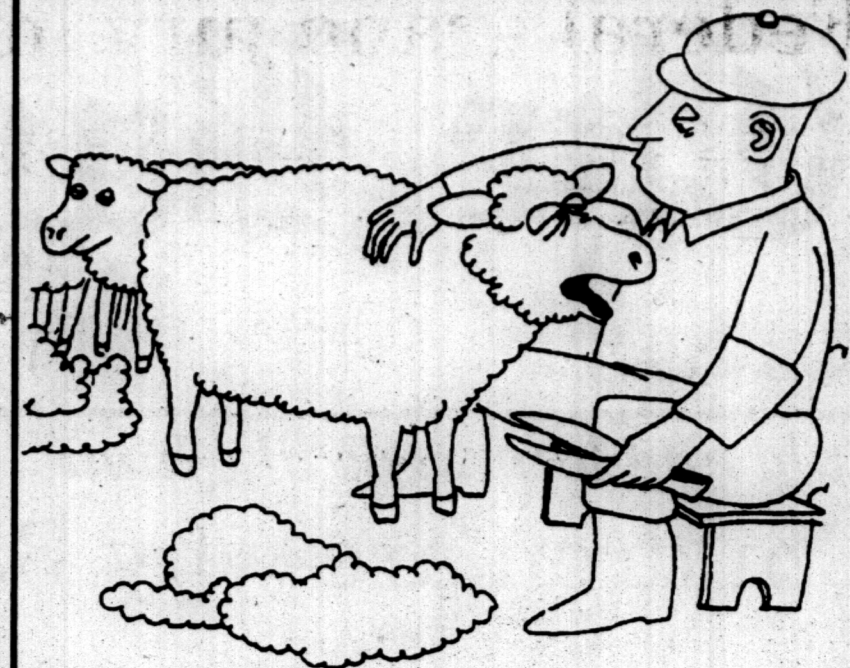
Others may view it as a sign of the times, a hijacking, or as one Alabama trustee said of Samford, it has been "stolen" from the state convention.

This editor wishes it had not

taken place, and sincerely hopes there is a schedule set when it will again be placed under the control of the convention. I believe we can trust the judgment of 2,000 churches and members more than 15 trustees who precipitated the change.

And who are these trustees? They certainly are not crooks. They are men who sincerely desire to protect the college and have acted in a manner which they consider is best for the school. The protest of the pastor/trustees was noted but not heeded in the meeting. The vote was 10 for the action, two opposed, and three abstaining.

What is next? We need to continue our support and loyalty to Mississippi College. The school is worthy of our sons and daughters, of our dollars and deeds, and could have its greatest days ahead. We have an excellent new president, an unsurpassed faculty and staff, and now perhaps more than ever, we need the full support of Mississippi Baptists.



"Medium to short on top and watch the sideburns."

THE FRAGMENTS

The shadow

The funeral was for a child less than a year old. My friend, Saturino, his wife, and several older children sat on a bench on the front porch of the nipa hut. The small handmade casket was at the edge of the steps.

The hot tropical sun made that particular section of the Philippine Islands most uncomfortable. A morning glory vine circled the porch and hung off a little toward the east. Most of the mourners had sought this bit of shade. Even Jonah had a gourd vine and the morning glory was eyed with a bit of envy.

The Filipino pastor was now

reading the Scripture: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shade of the Almighty...."

He read all of Psalm 91, but I was still reflecting on the shade or shadow of the Almighty. I've pondered it often since then. The shade of the Almighty is the most comfortable place in the world. The temperature, the locale, or the economic surroundings may be extreme, but the shade of the Almighty is still the best guarantee of comfort. Where his shade or shadow is means he is near.

— GH

Baptist Foundation Month...

Foundation announces additional
programs for Mississippi Baptists

For the past 50 years, it has been a source for endowed scholarships to Mississippi's Baptist colleges, a special friend to the Mississippi Baptist Children's Village, and a unique financial adviser to Baptist churches across the state. Still, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation (MBF) and its work are relatively unfamiliar to mainstream Baptists.

That's a pattern MBF committee

members and executives hope to change in the coming months. E. Harold Fisher Jr., executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, announced that Baptists would not only notice a visible difference (i.e., new logo), but would also be able to take advantage of an enlarged and improved roster of services.

"We've analyzed the services we've provided in the past to churches, individual members, and Baptist schools, and made deliber-

ate decisions to provide additional and enhanced financial services," said Fisher. Specifically, the list includes enhanced charitable

mission.

"First, we provide the avenues for individual Mississippi Baptists to give back to the Lord a portion of the assets he has blessed them with over a lifetime.

"Secondly, we provide an avenue for Mississippi Baptist churches and institutions to be the best stewards possible of the assets the Lord has given them," commented Fisher.

The fixed income fund utilizes U.S. government and corporate bonds, and is designed for churches desiring income with little emphasis on asset growth.

That differs sharply with the equity fund where common stock of U.S. companies is the investment instrument of choice. The equity funds emphasis is on capital appreciation.

Another investment option is the short term cash fund. Designed to outperform the yields of tradi-

remainder trusts, annuities, fixed income funds, equity funds, pooled income funds, and the increasingly popular short-term cash fund.

Long regarded as an instrument for endowments, wills, or estate planning, the MBF has embraced a new course that will allow it to work more closely with Baptist churches to achieve their financial needs and investment goals.

It's a direction MBF executives say closely parallels its basic

The
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Baptist Foundation

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Federal grand jury indicts Nobles; trial set for Nov. 7

Former Mississippi College President Lewis Nobles faces trial in Jackson Nov. 7 after a federal grand jury indicted him Sept. 21 on 19 felony counts in connection with the alleged embezzlement of millions of dollars while he was president of the private, Baptist-affiliated college in Clinton.

The indictment includes an additional count involving asset forfeiture, in which Nobles, 69,

could lose personal property and real estate that can be traced to illegal actions.

The indictment alleges mail fraud, money laundering, income tax evasion, and acts of immorality based on an investigation by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that covered the time period of Jan. 1, 1989, through Noble's resignation from the school on Aug. 3, 1993 — the time

period covered by statute of limitations laws.

Plea bargain negotiations between the U.S. Attorney's Office and Nobles broke down earlier this year, prompting prosecutors to take the case to the federal grand jury.

College officials estimated approximately \$3,000,000 is missing over 17 years, and prosecutors

said they have been able to account for over \$1.7 million Nobles allegedly converted to his own use during the period covered by the FBI investigation.

Investigators and prosecutors have spent more than a year tracking complicated banking and investment transactions conducted by Nobles, allegedly using donations intended for the school.

The indictment, signed by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kent McDaniel and Hinds County District Attorney Ed Peters, states that beginning in January 1977, Nobles "devised and intended to devise a

scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain money by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises."

Nobles was arraigned in Jackson Sept. 22 before U.S. Magistrate Alfred Nichols, who released him on \$15,000 personal recognizance bond and ordered him to keep the U.S. Probation Office informed of his medical and psychiatric diagnoses.

Nobles' attorney, Grady Tollison of Oxford, talked with reporters after the arraignment and promised a "vigorous defense" of the charges against his client.

Henry voices "hope, future" for Southern Baptist Convention

NASHVILLE (BP) — Jim Henry, speaking of nearly 1,000 letters he has received since his election as Southern Baptist Convention president, recounted:

"(One) theme kept coming through, and that was this: Is there any hope for the SBC? Do you think we're going to make it? Do you think we can move ahead?"

Addressing the SBC Executive Committee Sept. 19 in Nashville, Henry voiced Jeremiah 29:11-13 as his answer.

Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., elected as SBC president last June, tapped the words "remember, recommit, and refocus" in stating Southern Baptists have a hope and a future if they will: remember the SBC's heritage; recommit themselves to their responsibility, to the Cooperative Program, and to cooperation; and refocus on "what Christ called us to be...."

Henry listed one specific action he already has taken, listing it under the area of trust: ending C. Barry McCarty's longtime role as head parliamentarian for the SBC's annual meetings.

McCarty, of Cincinnati, an ordained Church of Christ minister, has been SBC parliamentarian since the 1986 annual meeting in Atlanta. Said Henry: "... this next year our parliamentarians will be made up of Southern Baptist parliamentarians. I have written Barry and I've called him and thanked him for the excellent work that he did at a critical time in our denomination. God used him. But now we need to move on... and this is one way that we're saying we're moving on to the future; we're moving on in trust."

Noting the SBC is moving into its Sesquicentennial year, Henry said, "Timing couldn't be better.... We need to remind the generation coming on among us that we ride the coattails of committed laity, pastors, professors, missionaries, visionaries, and institutional leaders." Some groups and individuals have "splintered off" over the years, Henry said, "but the mainstream of Southern Baptists has continued steadfastly forward."

The SBC must "push positively, unapologetically, and boldly" the Cooperative Program, "the most successful underwriting of missions, evangelism, seminary educa-

tion, and church planting in church history," Henry said. First Church, Orlando, has led the SBC in Cooperative Program giving the last three years.

"Any restructuring, renaming, or reengineering (of the Cooperative Program) must be done on the basis of enlarging its output in a meaningful way and not decreasing it," Henry said, voicing opposition to any change that "brings confusion to our people and lessens what we're currently doing."

"Our state leadership needs to speak up and be counted" in support of the Cooperative Program, Henry said. "Our state papers need to write up. Our associations need to stand up. Our churches need to move up in dollars and percentages. And our pastors need to lead the way."

Citing the "time, energy, and resources" many individuals have spent in defending biblical integrity, Henry urged similar commitment to "our prime delivery system for that same good truth to be disseminated in this nation and around the world."

Other facets of SBC polity also must be underscored, Henry said. The SBC exists "to serve the churches," he said, and leaders and trustees of SBC agencies act "on the behalf of the family of churches. Our best posture on this (Executive) Committee and in our institutions is the servant mode."

In addition to the Cooperative Program, Henry noted three other areas of recommitment needed in the SBC:

— "a stewardship of responsibility as the largest of the Protestant denominations," entailing leadership, encouragement, "being salt and light in a decadent society.... God can use us to be a powerful tool in renewal of denominational life that leaps across denominational lines," Henry said.

— Cooperation and trust. "We've been drinking from a deep well of mutual trust" in the SBC, Henry said. "It is, by and large, still in place...."

— "Talking with and not shouting at each other. We have brothers and sisters in Christ who have been unfairly judged and labeled....," Henry said. "This intolerance has burned bridges.... It has caused anger, hostility, and anxiety. This is not the spirit of Jesus Christ."

The Baptist Record

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Thursday, September 29, 1994

Published Since 1877

MC trustees change board makeup; leaders cry foul

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Mississippi College's governing board of trustees, meeting Sept. 22 on the school's Clinton campus, voted to immediately expand the board and begin selecting 75% of its own members in order to "distance" the Baptist-affiliated school from "denominational politics," according to Board Chairman Harry Vickery of Greenville.

The move stunned four pastors who serve as trustees, as well the leaders of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, all of whom said they were not told of the proposal before the meeting began.

"For several years, we as trustees have felt the uneasiness among Baptist institutions and Baptist churches that unfortunately are affected by denominational politics. We felt it important to distance the college from these denominational politics in order to be assured that the college could continue to thrive and fulfill its mission to all Baptists," Vickery said in a prepared statement issued after the meeting.

"The board of trustees exercised its power to change the charter of the corporation to modify the selection process for the board of trustees. As modified, the board was enlarged from 15 trustees to 24 trustees, six of whom will be selected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention," he explained.

Prior to the Sept. 22 board meeting, all trustees were selected by messengers to the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Vickery also said the change would add more diversity and Baptist laity to the board while helping the college raise money to replace "dwindling" support from the state convention.

action," the pastors said in a statement issued Sept. 26.

The pastors alleged that eight elected board members, two honorary board members, and attorneys were involved in the decision "to the exclusion of the remainder of the board."

The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), in a specially-called meeting on Sept. 23 that lasted nearly four hours, confirmed in a prepared statement that no one on the committee had any prior knowledge of the trustee action.

The executive committee also reported that Convention President Rex Yancey, pastor of First Church, Pascagoula, and Bill Causey, MBCB executive director-treasurer, did not know of the trustees' plans.

"Everyone was shocked and saddened. For 168 years, Mississippi Baptists

and Mississippi College have worked in cooperation and harmony, (and) we desire that relationship to continue. We are closely monitoring events and prayerfully considering our position. We will keep Mississippi Baptists informed as events unfold, but (we) have no further statement at this time," the executive committee said.

Vickery pointed out that the college's board was not attempting to move the college away from its historic Baptist roots.

"We hope no one will interpret this action as distancing us from the Mississippi Baptist Convention — nothing could be further from the truth," he said.

(See related items, page 4)

Mississippi College trustees

J. Kelly Allgood
Harry Vickery
Eddie Hamilton
Leland Speed
Roy Noble Lee
W.B. Alexander
W.W. Gresham Jr.
Frank Gunn
Charles Pail
W.K. Paine
Aven Whittington
John Rogers
J.W. Fagan
Jimmy Porter
Gordon H. Sansing

Jackson
Greenville
Jackson
Jackson
Forest
Cleveland
Indianola
Biloxi
Bay Springs
Jackson
Greenwood
Brandon
Laurel
McComb
Vicksburg

MC trustee chairman explains decision to alter board makeup

Statement by Harry Vickery, Chairman
Mississippi College Board of Trustees
September 22, 1994

(full text)

The Board of Trustees at Mississippi College met in regular session today on the campus and took action to amend the college charter concerning the selection of trustees to the college.

This action was taken to ensure that Mississippi College can remain true to its Baptist heritage and traditions of serving all Mississippi Baptists and their churches.



Vickery

With a long tradition as a conservative institution serving all Mississippi Baptists, the board felt very strongly about taking action to preserve the college's ability to continue that service. For several years, we as trustees have felt the uneasiness among Baptist institutions and Baptist churches that unfortunately are affected by denominational politics. We felt it important to distance the college from these denominational politics in order to be assured that the college could continue to thrive and to fulfill its mission to serve all Baptists.

Our charter did not protect the institution sufficiently from outside influences. The trustees felt that it was our responsibility to provide the necessary insulation for Mississippi College from the potential actions of various factions that could compromise our ability to serve all Baptists.

At our board meeting today, we changed the manner in which board members are chosen. Mississippi College was organized in 1826 as a self-contained, legal, non-profit corporation. Consistent with Mississippi law applicable to nonprofit corporations, the board of trustees exercised its power to change the charter of the corporation to modify the selection process for the board of trustees. As modified, the board was enlarged from 15 trustees to 24 trustees, six of whom will be selected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

In order to safeguard our dedi-

cation to our mission to serve Baptists, the following steps were taken:

— The charter includes a new provision that all trustees must be Baptists.

— 25% (six of 24) of the trustees will be selected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

— We are publicly stating and reaffirming our commitment to our Baptist traditions of service.

— Article 5 of the charter now states explicitly that the college will operate "within the Christian-oriented aims and ideals of Baptists, under the control of Baptists."

While the vote on this change in the charter was not unanimous, the vote was approved by overwhelming majority. It's important to note that the motion to take this action was made by Judge Roy Noble Lee and seconded by Henry Hederman, both of whom have been long-term and loyal supporters of the college.

The lay members of Mississippi College's board have not engaged in any of the denominational politics in our national or state convention. We do not consider that our role as trustees. We want to remain close to the convention — our action today is simply to distance us from only the politics of the convention. It was a step to ensure that the college could remain true to its mission without fear of being shaped by influences beyond its control.

We hope that no one will interpret this action as distancing us from the Mississippi Baptist Convention — nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, our primary reason for this action, as I've stated, is to ensure that we can better serve all Mississippi Baptists. We are no less Baptist by this action, and no less committed to Baptist churches and their pastors. Anyone observing campus activities, or classroom sessions, will see no difference in operations or policies, because there will be no difference.

Although the action had been discussed for several years by one or another of the trustees, today's meeting was the first time it had been discussed officially. At the

time of his employment, Dr. Todd was not made aware of the informal discussions of the various board members contemplating this action. He was informed of the board's interest only in recent days, when we asked him not to take a position. We did not want anyone on any side to be critical of him, since this decision was not his and he had no part in it. He indicated he would abide by and support whatever action the board approved.

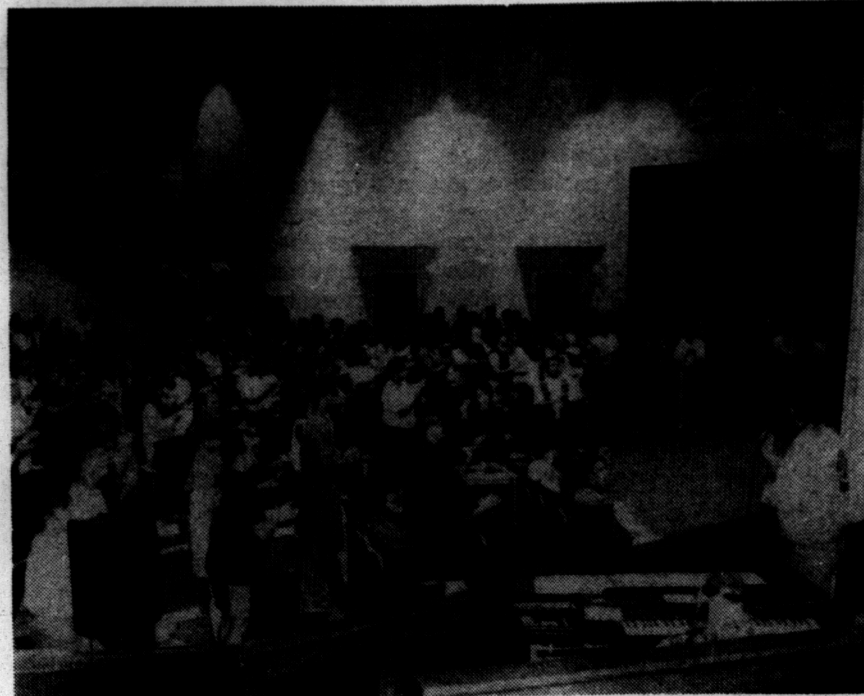
While the primary reason for the trustees' action today is to provide the necessary protection for the institution to serve all Mississippi Baptists, there are other reasons that factored into the decision. While remaining unwavering in our commitment to our Baptist heritage, we also aspire to reach a greater level of prominence in higher education circles in the nation without compromising that heritage.

Fund raising is a key element to any private institution, and we must ensure that we have the leading Baptist business people on the board to leverage the much needed support for the college. We need a larger board, and to add diversity and more Baptist laity to the board. Our support from the Mississippi Baptist Convention had been steadily dwindling as a percentage of our general budget, and this has required our aggressive pursuit of outside funding to keep the cost to the Mississippi Baptist student reasonable.

Another dimension to our furthering the mission of Mississippi College is reaching out to a few key Baptist leaders in adjacent states. The college needs to broaden its horizons and open its doors to the region for its high quality academic programs delivered in a solid spiritual atmosphere. As the nation realizes more and more the need for an education grounded in solid Christian values, Mississippi College can reach greater prominence by developing a broader vision of its service area without compromising our focus on Mississippi Baptists.

The trustees are unwavering in their commitment to Mississippi College's role as a superb Christian institution dedicated to the love of Christ, to the advancement of his kingdom, and to the delivery of a high quality academic program. It is our fervent hope that the Mississippi Baptist Convention will continue to support Mississippi College. We want a harmonious and supportive relationship with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, a relationship that is cordial and meaningful yet free of the politics of the denomination. Our arms, our hearts, and our heads are open and inviting to all Mississippi Baptists to continue to build on this old and revered university called Mississippi College.

— Compiled by Teresa Dickens



Student Conference

Over 800 students from college campuses across Mississippi gathered Sept. 23-24 at First Church, Clinton, for the 1994 State College Student Conference. Among program personalities were musicians Mack and Shayla Blake (bottom right corner) from Ruston, La. Full coverage of the event, sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Student Work Department, will be included in next week's edition of *The Baptist Record*. (Photo by Teresa Dickens)

Dissenting MC trustees issue minority report on decision to change board

Minority Report of the Mississippi College Board of Trustees
September 26, 1994

(full text)

On Thursday, September 22, action was taken by the MC board of trustees to enlarge the board from 15 to 24 (members) and to make 18 of those 24 slots self-perpetuating.

The following trustees objected to the action for the following reasons:

1. Process of trusteeship was violated. Eight elected members, two honorary members, and attorneys were involved in the decision for the above action to the exclusion of the remainder of the board. None of the pastors on the board had knowledge of the action prior to the board meeting on September 22.

The entire board, including the ministers, are elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention and are given the trust of its institution and should be allowed to function as trustees.

2. This action is a violation of Baptist polity. No institution has

been authorized by the Mississippi Baptist Convention to select its own trustees either in part or totally. This decision should have been a Mississippi Baptist Convention decision and not the decision of 10 men. This decision violates the trust of all Mississippi Baptists.

In conclusion, we deplore this action. We were completely left out of the process of trusteeship. We feel betrayed and violated. We consider both the process and the action totally unacceptable and in no way do we concur with or condone this action.

Jimmy Porter, pastor
First Church, McComb

Gordon Sansing, pastor
First Church, Vicksburg

Frank Gunn, pastor
First Church, Biloxi

Eddie Hamilton, Dir. of Missions
Hinds-Madison Association

State executive committee responds to board's action

(full text)

The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is, of course, vitally interested in Mississippi College. No one on the executive committee or the executive director or the president of the (Mississippi Baptist) Convention, had any prior knowledge of the decision made by the Mississippi College trustees.

Everyone was shocked and saddened. For 168 years, Mississippi Baptists and Mississippi College have worked in cooperation and harmony, (and) we desire that relationship to continue.

We are closely monitoring events and prayerfully considering our position. We will keep Mississippi Baptists informed as events unfold, but (we) have no further statement at this time.

Mississippi College

Organized:	1826
Mississippi Baptist Convention accepts tender of the college and properties:	1850
MC operating budget receipts for 1993-94 (June to May):	\$24,983,294
Cooperative Program and designated money forwarded to the college through MBO during 1993-94 fiscal year:	\$1,751,986
Fall 1994 enrollment:	3,590

SBC Executive Committee urges caution in CP change in states

By Herb Hollinger & Art Toalston

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Executive Committee, concerned about possible changes in the historic Cooperative Program relationship with several states, urged extreme caution in any departure from "this God-given and time honored approach to funding a world mission strategy."

In other business, the committee asked for copies of contracts the SBC Annuity Board has with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and heard requests from 19 agencies for more than \$146 million from the 1995-96 SBC Program Allocation Budget.

The CP resolution, carefully worded but pointed in its concern, was approved by the committee during its Sept. 19-20 meeting. Several state conventions will consider allowing changes in the traditional state-SBC Cooperative Program in annual meetings this fall.

Texas and North Carolina will consider plans which offer churches opportunity to give to state and other mission causes called "Cooperative Program" but not include the SBC. However, no state convention is mentioned in the four-paragraph resolution.

The resolution seeks to remind state conventions that CP funds have never been used to fund organizations "having no accountability to state conventions or the SBC," and it asks the states to inform constituents "of the variances of theology and doctrine being embraced and espoused by some groups identifying themselves as Southern Baptists...." Several committee members said it was a pointed reference to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The resolution also included three attachments produced by the committee's convention relations office which described the theological differences between the SBC and the CBF.

Also, the 80-member committee

voted to request the SBC Annuity Board to provide the committee with a written report of "all involvement with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, including copies of all contracts with the CBF, by the February 1995 Executive Committee meeting."

The Annuity Board services the CBF with a retirement and protection plan similar to plans with SBC boards and agencies. The CBF had been sending funds to SBC agencies, from some SBC churches, until the agencies were directed during the June SBC annual meeting to no longer accept those funds.

Although it was not clear what the Executive Committee would do with the report, there is an apparent interest by some committee members to persuade the Annuity Board to discontinue business with the CBF. An Annuity Board spokesman at the Executive Committee meeting declined to speculate on how the board would respond.

Current Annuity Board policies allow it to service organizations which are connected in some way with Southern Baptists, like Mid-America Seminary, Memphis, but not controlled by a Southern Baptist national or state entity.

The September Executive Committee meeting traditionally hears the first request from SBC agencies for Cooperative Program funding for the next year's budget. The committee will recommend a 1995-96 SBC Program Allocation Budget to the June 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta.

The 19 requests totaled \$146,364,915, which is more than 7% above the 1994-95 budget of \$136,539,730. Heading the list were the Christian Life Committee, asking for a 28.5% increase, and the Radio and Television Commission, seeking 27.6% more.

Executive Committee members

approved a resolution affirming R. Albert Mohler Jr. as president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., although not mentioning controversy surrounding Mohler's request for the resignation of associate professor of theology Molly Marshall, which she submitted Aug. 22. Mohler refused to list specifics but charged Marshall, a 10-year faculty member, had taught outside the seminary's doctrinal Abstract of Principles.

The resolution, submitted by James Merritt, pastor of First Church of Snellville, Ga., stated, "Dr. Mohler's sensitivity to the concerns, intents, and purposes of the supporting constituency of the seminary... and the trustees... elected by the... Convention reflects the kind of servant leadership... that will... maintain Southern Seminary as an institution of distinctive academic recognition."

In other business, the Executive Committee:

— approved forwarding, without comment, a report from a special theological education study committee to the program and structure study committee for its consideration. Both committees were established by the Executive Committee but the program and structure study committee is looking at all the SBC programs and structure.

— discontinued a feasibility study of a proposed SBC TV news program "because the projected costs exceed projected financial resources." The committee said the project could be revived "when funding resources are deemed to be imminently available."

— declined action on a motion referred from the SBC annual meeting for provisions in the SBC constitution for removing a trustee or trustees by a simple majority vote of messengers at the annual meeting. It is "a complex issue and is a matter of ongoing study," the Executive Committee stance noted.

— declined action on a referred motion barring SBC missions agencies from asking missionary applicants "about inerrancy or about any other matter of faith and practice."

— declined action on other referrals calling for review and updating of the Baptist Faith and Message; for procedures for Baptists not in attendance at the SBC annual meeting to vote on SBC business; for prohibitions against the Committee on Nominations, Committee on Committees, and Committee on Order of Business nominating/recommending to the respective committees family members, fellow church members, or co-workers of current committee members; a prohibition against Committee on Nominations members being spouses of full-time church or denominational workers; the naming of Committee on Committees members by the president of each state Baptist convention.

Hollinger is director; Toalston writes for Baptist Press.

Thursday, September 29, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Toys to comfort kids

Acteens, RAs, GAs (above), and members of Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale, recently donated 100 teddy bears and other stuffed animals to Police Chief George Miller, Sheriff Eugene Howell, and local Highway Patrol officers. The toys will be carried in law officers' automobiles and used to calm children in crisis situations. Jerry Mixon is pastor.

NOBTS trustees accept Ga. site; respond to SBC motions from Orlando

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary trustees voted to accept the gift of an entire church complex in Decatur, Ga., Sept. 13, to house its north Georgia theological program.

Seminary administrators told trustees that declining membership at Columbia Drive Church had made maintenance of the church's sizable property difficult and the congregation was willing to donate the property with the understanding they be allowed to continue worshipping there.

The seminary's north Georgia center has been meeting at Roswell Street Church in Roswell since 1978, seminary President Landrum Leavell said.

School officials said the Columbia Drive property is debt-free, with estimated annual upkeep costs to the seminary of \$75,000-\$100,000.

In other business, trustees addressed a motion referred from the June 1994 Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando calling upon the convention's seminaries not to use Cooperative Program (CP) funds to educate students whose churches do not contribute through the Southern Baptist funding channel.

Trustee chairman Ed Johnson of Florida reported the seminary

already was in compliance, and trustees affirmed the motion as seminary policy.

Trustees also acted on a recommendation from the SBC Executive Committee concerning accepting funds contributed to SBC agencies through the Baptist moderates' Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Johnson, pastor of First Church, Ocala, Fla., drafted a statement of compliance and stated, "We have ceased accepting funds from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship."

Trustees also elected Robert L. Hamblin of Tupelo, as professor of evangelism and named Hamblin to the new Max and Bonnie Thornhill Chair of Evangelism, the seminary's second fully funded chair of evangelism.

Darryl K. Ferrington was named assistant professor of music education, while Claude L. Howe Jr. was appointed professor emeritus of church history.

Howe, originally from Senatobia, retired at the end of July; he taught church history at New Orleans Seminary from 1959 to 1994.

Trustees set March 14-16, 1995, as the dates for their regular annual meeting and Sept. 12-13, 1995, as their next semiannual meeting.

Baptist Book Stores eliminate positions throughout 65 stores

NASHVILLE (BP) — To position the 65-store chain of Baptist Book Stores to "operate more efficiently in a competitive environment," 116 full- and part-time positions in the stores are being eliminated, including 80 vacant positions, according to Mark Scott, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's retail division. The 36 affected people work in

18 stores in the chain, Scott said. Four are eligible for retirement. The remainder will receive career transition and outplacement assistance along with severance pay based on years of service.

"These changes are part of implementation of a new staffing philosophy made necessary by today's competitive environment," Scott said.

Conference for Ministers' Wives set for October 31

The annual conference of Mississippi Baptist Ministers' Wives will be held Oct. 31 at First Church, Jackson.

That date is one day prior to the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Keynote speakers for the Ministers' Wives conference will be

Lynda Street of Clinton and Rhonda Kelley of New Orleans.

Street is administrative assistant in the Department of Christian Studies and Philosophy at Mississippi College. She will lead a conference titled, "And So, What Do You Do?"

Kelley is adjunct professor at New Orleans Seminary and associate director of Innovative Evangelism. Her conference topic will be "Divine Discipline."

The conference is free, and will begin at 1 p.m. at First Church, Jackson. The conference will adjourn at 4:30.

Limited preschool child care will be available with advance registration by Oct. 24.

For advance child care registration or more information, contact the Office of Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 968-3800.



Street



Kelley

Where do pastors go for help?

Mendenhall minister finds shepherds in unlikely places

By Kermit McGregor

A pastor always needs a pastor! In God's wisdom the "shepherding process" begins long before one becomes a pastor in the professional sense.

The crude but sturdy plank pew on the east side of the pulpit in the one-room "worship center" was most often occupied by my dad and me.

From this visionary post the first pastor I remember was J.S. Grubbs, a man who proclaimed God's truth with conviction, courage, and a deep resonant voice. He consistently dressed in dark trousers, a long-sleeved white shirt draped with flexible armbands, and a conservative tie. A glass and a pitcher of water was usually placed on the right side of the pulpit for his benefit.

He began his sermons slowly but as emotions and gestures intensified, an unexpected cowlick bounced from the back of his head capturing my attention for the rest of the service. He was God's messenger pointing me and other sinners to the Saviour as he had done years before for my parents.

Approximately 10 years later Grubbs requested me to direct the first Vacation Bible School of his ministry. His days on earth were numbered as illness strapped him physiologically and psychologically. With great difficulty he was able to deliver the evangelistic sermon on Thursday in Bible School and 17 teenagers accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour.

Grubbs was so moved spiritually he asked me to join him for a season of prayer on Friday. At the conclusion of the prayer time he encouraged me to believe, preach, and practice God's Word and to pursue academic quests while maintaining "doctrinal soundness."

The second pastor was a hard-working bivocational "drooped shouldered" man named Johnny M. McMillan who baptized me on a Sunday afternoon in a muddy stock pond. Imprinted on my mind to this day is the image of his worn Bible, his consistent prayer life, his emphasis on Jesus and his church.

It has been more than two decades since I conducted his memorial service, yet I can almost see his body swaying on "bended knees" and hear the sincere reverberations of "Kind, Loving, Holy, and Righteous Father, we approach your throne of grace...."

The third pastor, James W. Henry, was an intelligent, skillful, compassionate teacher who performed our wedding, licensed and ordained me, taught me how to baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, introduce people to Jesus, and care for hurting people.

The fourth "pastor figure"

God used to meet my spiritual needs was Wilfred C. Tyler, Modena Lowery Berry Professor of Bible, and later president of Blue Mountain College.

He motivated me to dig for the nuggets of God's treasured Word, whetted my appetite for the Greek New Testament, and introduced me to denominational opportunities and responsibilities. It was he who took Phyllis and me to our first Mississippi Baptist Convention and prepared me for seminary orientation.

I was still a teenage pastor when my first "church crisis" reared its head. Scared but determined to survive, I was led fortunately to J. William Harbin, a busy pastor of a county seat's First Church. He was extraordinarily kind, took me to lunch in his home, patiently listened, and quietly offered suggestions for a solution to the crisis.

The next "pastoral help" came from a layman, a medical doctor friend. Glen Pearson heard I was hospitalized with acute illness due to surgical removal of a kidney stone. He learned that I was emotionally traumatized because my wife was confined to the home with our two sick children.

On a Sunday morning Glen, led by God's Spirit, drove across town through the snow, spent less than three minutes in my room, but verbalized a prayer that God used to raise me to health.

It was Easter Sunday morning, April 1980, three days after heart surgery when W. Douglas Hudgins burst through the CCU unit door. "Son (he always addressed me that way), they tell me you are depressed. It's Easter! Jesus Christ is alive! You are alive! You are going to live and preach again."

He was right! For almost 14 additional years I had no major health problems.

To share definitively, whether in verbal or written form, the greatest heartaches of my ministry would embarrass some, expose some, endanger some, and exhibit unnecessary wounds that have long since healed for me and my family. Please know that the hurts have been as real to me as "a pastor" as to any individual in any other vocation.

It was Schuyler Batson who epitomized God's ideal "pastor" during one of these lowest periods. When I was serving in denominational ministries and was not scheduled to preach for five years, I attended his Sunday School class and repeatedly went to prayer meeting to hear him pray and teach with simplicity and clarity God's Word.

The greatest "pastoral visit" of my life came through Schuyler one afternoon as Phyllis and I



In this photo taken in 1985, Milton Ferguson (left), president of Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., shows a new bronze medallion of the seminary seal to then-trustee chairman Kermit McGregor. McGregor at that time served as director of public relations for the Baptist Children's Village.

were weeping, totally devastated, because circumstances had politically positioned us where we had requested and sought never to be.

We cried out to God and he answered our pleas through Schuyler. He laboriously made his way up the incline to our back door with love, empathy, and compassion etched on his face.

Due to his own failing health he was unable to speak for a time. His tears, however, were as real as ours as he became "God's shepherd for the suffering." No visit nor prayer time has ever been more timely in the 39 years of our "ministerial assignments." Phyllis and I will never forget!

When does a pastor need a pastor? When he sits where he never dreamed of sitting — in a courtroom facing the pressures of a family member's custody suit. I probably would not have made it through that day had not a deacon friend slipped in unannounced to sit beside me as "a pastor." Jimmy Pittman is a lawyer but he came as a "shepherd" rather than an attorney.

Only God in heaven knows how much Ethan E. Moore has meant to Phyllis and me during days known only to him and my family. He seems to have a direct line to God to know when to call, write, and/or drive 400 miles to pray with me. The son of a Baptist minister, he has an unusual love for ministers in caring spiritually, morally, emotionally, doctrinally, and financially.

It was April 5, 1994, when the third "sudden death" syndrome resulted in the monitor's flat line as physicians stood around my bed and effected the "shock treatment."

I needed a pastor! God sent one of my best friends, J. Truett Gannon, from Smoke Rise Church in Stone Mountain, Ga.

Truett and I had become close friends through trustee assignments at Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City. After a brief visit with me in ICU at Emory University Hospital, Atlanta, he shared compassionately with his congregation how sick I was, asked them to pray, and reported that I said I was in a "win, win situation."

The Smoke Rise fellowship responded and God allowed me to worship in person with that congregation in July.

Many of Truett's church members and every staff member came to see me during the weeks I spent at Emory before and after the heart transplant in June and the abdominal surgery in July.

God sent another pastor for the pastorless. Nine years after I was ordained by the Algoma Church, David Poe was sent to serve by the same church. This year has been 30 years since I last preached in revival services for him.

After Poe learned of my heart transplant he offered the use of his house in Snellville, Ga., (22 miles from Emory) for my recuperative time.

God shows up in unexpected ways. A Catholic chaplain, a Nigerian national, quickly demonstrated he knew far more than catechisms and clichés as he interceded on my behalf. The greatest spiritual influence came in the most unorthodox and unexpected manner.

Chaplain Jenane Israel is a divorced, bivocational female United Methodist church pastor. When she responded to God's call to service, she "adopted" the name Israel. She said the history of Israel so parallels aspects of her own pilgrimage she felt compelled to use this as a testimony. What a witness! I shall always

remember her approach to the Father: "Good morning God...."

When one is near death, confined to an isolated area in a strange hospital 400 miles from home, one's stereotyped concept of ministry fades quickly as God proves that he still writes the scripts for his servants.

Words of thanksgiving must be given to God because of the "pastoral care" given by members of First Church, Mendenhall. They are the ones who have written us the most, remained faithful in worship and outreach, provided our salary and total benefits for months without complaining, secured Tom Rayburn as our interim pastor, compensated him, and welcomed me home and back to the pulpit with great encouragement. Phyllis and I will never forget!

Other pastors throughout the state will never forget this congregation's example of how to encourage a pastor who needs a pastor.

Like the writer of Hebrews, time would fail to tell of George Puckett, L. Graham Smith, Claude Smith, Dwight Williams, Aubrey Boone, Clifton Perkins, James Richardson, Joel Haire, David Bush, Ed McDonald, Paul N. Nunnery, Charles Gentry, Brooks Wester, Jerry H. Smith, Steve Smith, Thad Moore, Steve Jordan, Rex Yancey, Jim Futral, Bill Causey, Oliver Ladnier, James L. Travis, Bill R. Baker, Glen and Juanita Schilling, Farris Smith, John Nowlin, Tom Rayburn, Milton Ferguson, and scores like them who have been God's "pastors" to me and mine.

Weldon Stevens wrote that "the man in the pew sometimes feels that in the midst of the discomfort of working, paying bills, raising children and such, that surely someone must go through life and not have to face what I do. He looks around and decides that the preacher is a person with no problems."

I hope these comments will remind us all that "pastors need pastors, too." May God lead me to be a pastor to you when you need one!

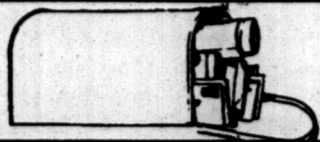
McGregor is pastor, First Church, Mendenhall.

Chunky Church celebrates centennial

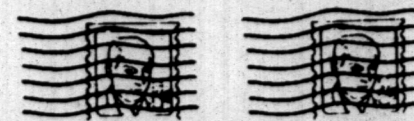
Chunky Church, Newton Association, will mark its 100th anniversary on Oct. 16.

The celebration will begin at 10:30 a.m. All former pastors and music directors are encouraged to attend.

For more information, call the church at (601) 655-8296.



Letters to the editor



Send the Record

Editor:

Southwestern Seminary has students who call Mississippi home and students who leave here to serve in your state. As one who teaches denominational polity and administration, I would like to call on the churches to help us complete the education of your students.

It would seem appropriate for each church in Mississippi that sends its men and women to Southwestern or other seminaries to keep its students informed by providing these students with information about Baptists. A gift subscription to *The Baptist Record* is a small investment in those who will lead our churches and denomination.

Royce Ross
Southwestern Seminary
Fort Worth, Texas

Schools need prayer

Editor:

Regarding a "Capsules" item in the Sept. 22 issue of *The Baptist Record*:

Given the present condition of the public schools in our nation, it is an abomination that Barry Lynn (of Americans United for Separation of Church and State) has declared war on the first ray of hope in 30 years. While he is correct in stating that the public schools are under assault, it is not the "religious right" who is the

culprit. Lynn's philosophies have been followed ever since God was outlawed to the everlasting detriment of our precious young people. Statistics are widely available documenting the downhill plunge public education has taken under the liberal agenda which now dominates.

What is this group afraid of: that guns, drugs, condoms, and deplorable academic standards may get pushed aside for virtue and excellence?

Ann H. Staley
Jackson

Open eyes to children

Editor:

I attended an area conference for the Baptist Children's Village.

It was heartbreaking to hear the pleas for help for the children's personal needs by Ronnie Robinson and staff.

It should not be so, seeing how God has so abundantly blessed our great state and churches.

Wake up, churches of Mississippi. Open your eyes and hearts to our children's special needs.

Today's children are tomorrow's churches.

Avis Rollins
Amory

God-oriented worship

Editor:

In a news release (*Baptist Record*, Aug. 18) Ron Owens of the Home Mission Board

expressed concern that entertainment is being confused with worship.

One author in a national news magazine noted current tensions regarding the evening news broadcasts on television. The news was not adequately being presented because entertainment dominated the broadcasts, he said. Possibly very few viewers are discerning enough to distinguish entertainment from news. The evening broadcasts that take the entertainment approach have the largest viewing audiences.

Could it be possible that a similar trend has occurred within many churches for pragmatic reasons? Possibly most people cannot discern the difference between worship and entertainment where preaching, music, or activities are concerned? Obviously, the churches that focus on entertainment type worship services are attracting the largest crowds.

We seem to be so surprised that non-Christians behave like non-Christians that we have more to say about them than we do about the Lord. We find more acceptance from people when we are focusing on sin and sinners than we do when exhorting Christians to be Christlike in their thinking and behavior. We do not get applause when we engage people in worship that leads to spiritual change.

Owens was quoted as saying, "Worship can never be seeker-friendly." Jesus said that people

who do evil do not come to the light because they do not want to be exposed. So when people are coming to our worship services and really enjoying themselves — the music excites them, they like what they are hearing in the sermons, and the preacher keeps them laughing — we need to do some critical examination of what's happening. The options are not whether to have a boring worship service or to have a live-

ly worship service. I believe that when God's people are in reality worshipping him, there is no way they can be bored.

I think Owens is challenging us to consider if we have made worship compatible to our generation, and if we need rather to provide worship that is more oriented to what pleases God than man.

George F. Lee
Columbia

Executive Committee abortion stance gets Annuity Board reps' OK

By Art Toalston

NASHVILLE (BP) — The president and trustee chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board promised cooperative efforts on the issue of abortion to members of the SBC Executive Committee during the first session of the committee's Sept. 19-20 meeting in Nashville.

The commitments were voiced prior to unanimous Executive Committee approval of a motion requesting Annuity Board trustees to add abortion providers and companies making contributions to abortion providers to the list of investments prohibited under board policy. Currently Annuity Board policy prohibits invest-

ments in the liquor, tobacco, gambling, and pornography industries. Atop the list of pro-lifers' concerns are companies contributing to Planned Parenthood.

The Executive Committee action marked the fourth time in a year it has discussed the question of Annuity Board investment policy regarding abortion-related stocks.

Annuity Board President Paul Powell told Executive Committee members Sept. 19, "You've asked us to study it, to consider it, and that's what we're willing to do." But, he noted, the Executive Committee recommendation will become board policy only if Annuity Board trustees adopt it.

Otherwise, trustee chairman Richard Scott said, the Annuity Board has not found a mutual fund that "does the same screening that we as Southern Baptists would like to see." Scott is dean of Baylor University's business school in Waco, Texas, and has been chairman of the Annuity Board trustee investment committee the last several years.

And a board survey of 2,000 participants in its annuity plans found only 20 willing to put all their money in a new, perhaps lower-yielding fund and only about 100 to put some of their money in, Scott said. Such numbers do not justify the \$2-3 million needed to create the fund and would not provide the \$8-10 million needed in initial investments, he said.

No matter what investment fund is utilized, Scott noted, the biggest supporter of abortion — the U.S. government — will not be affected. "You really can't be in the investment business," he said, "without holding government securities."

Toalston writes for Baptist Press.

Rawlings, 68, dies Sept. 19

James C. Rawlings, 68, died of cancer Sept. 19 in Meridian.

Funeral services were held Sept. 21 at Barham Funeral Home with burial in Meridian Memorial Park.

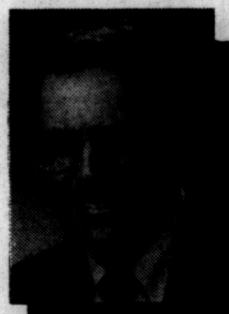
Rawlings had served as pastor of First Church, Lauderdale; Liberty Church, DeKalb; and as assistant pastor of Calvary Church.

He had previously retired from the Meridian Police Department after 21 years.

"My dad was in the police department for several years when he felt the call to be a minister," said Rawlings' son Tommy of Jackson. "He studied for the ministry at Clarke College in Newton.... He did that at night, and commuted."

Rawlings also started a mission in Lauderdale, a small community north of Meridian.

In addition to his son Tommy, Rawlings is survived by his wife Sarah; son David of Saipan, Mariana Islands; three sisters; and one grandson.



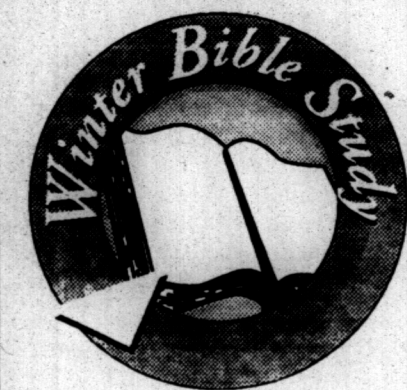
James Earl Harvey

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25, NAS

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DATE: October 10, Blue Mountain College
Paschal Student Center
October 11, Delta State University
Baptist Student Center
October 12, Mississippi College
B.C. Rogers Student Center
October 13, William Carey College
Thomas Business Building

TIME: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

TEACHER: James Earl Harvey, BSSB, Nashville

COST: None

LUNCH: Complimentary of respective host school and MBCB
Sunday School Department

NO RESERVATION REQUIRED

For more information, contact Larry Salter, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Sunday School Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205; phone (800) 748-1651 or (601) 968-3800.

Churches adopt Expanded Annuity Plan

The following churches have adopted the Expanded Annuity Plan since those reported in the Sept. 8 issue of *The Baptist Record*: Lee: Monument Drive; and Walthall: New Zion.

Just for the Record



Seventy-two children from Highland Church, Laurel, traveled to Roosevelt State Park near Morton in July to attend Children's Camp. Ken Regan, associate pastor of education, outreach, and children's ministries, organized the camp and accompanied the children. The annual event includes Bible study, praise, devotionals, sports, and crafts. This year's



"The Melody Makers" of Maybank Church, Hattiesburg, has almost doubled its membership in the last nine months. Under the direction of June Lee, the choir has performed at revivals, senior adult meetings, and associational meetings. Members, pictured left to right, are: first row, Justin (a member's great grandson), Annie Smith, Elsie Smith, Doris Mixon, Bertie Mae Keys, Cozy Pav, Martha Kittrell; second row, Edna Bullock, Elaine Clinton, Nell Aultman, Earline Watts; third row, Beulah Broome, Joe Warden, Norma Jean Clinton, Jean Richards, Ida Warden, Juanita McAlister; fourth row, Ray Bullock, Paul Clinton, Walter Watts, Robert Smith, Bobby Lee, Jimmy Purvis, Bill Kittrell, George Aultman (pastor), and Malcolm Mixon. Not pictured are Bonnie Williamson, Elsie Mayes, Johnnie Tebo, Mike Jones, James Grimsley, Barbara Grimsley, Judy Corley, and June Lee.

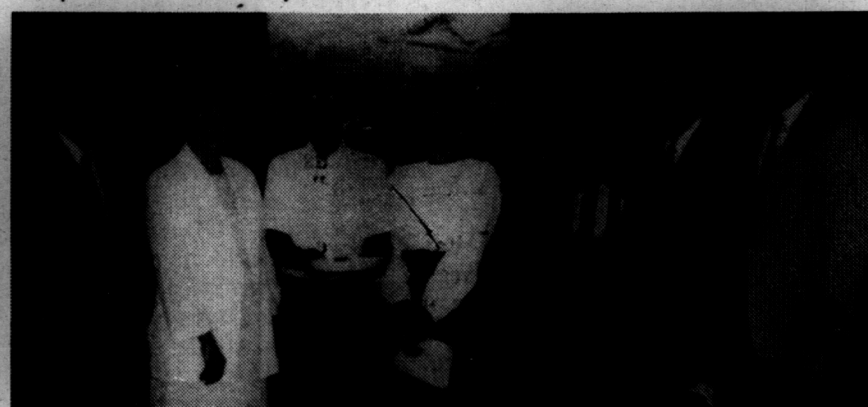


Mt. Pleasant Church, Gloster, recently honored its Acteens with a recognition service under the theme "Promises." Those honored are pictured, left to right: front row, Dana Huff, queen; Tina Whittington, queen with scepter; Hannah Forman, queen with scepter; and Becky Floyd, queen. Assisting with the presentation were Acteens Valeria Clayton, Kristi Huff, April Ravencraft, Jessica Longmire, and Lacey Huff. Leaders are Mary Whittington and Sue Whittington. Keith Zachary is pastor.



The children's choir of Evansville Church, Coldwater, recently depicted the story of Josiah in a presentation called "Good Things Come in Small Packages." The choir is directed by James Hugh Powell. Pianist is Sharon Spears.

theme was "Knowing God through His Creation, Word, and Son." Guest speakers were visiting missionaries to Ethiopia, Mike and Andrea Bryant. According to Regan, 11 professions of faith were made at the 3-day camp. Dennis Sewell is pastor.



Calvary Church, Belmont, recently held a debt retirement ceremony to celebrate the retirement of debt on its educational and fellowship building. Participating in the ceremony were (top photo, left to right: Dickey Turville, Beulah Stephens, Leonard Osborne, Ann Parrish, Greg Pharr, Mark Howard (former pastor), and Tommy Purvis (current pastor). A team of volunteers from Calvary (above) conducted mission Bible Schools in the Southeast Indiana Baptist Association in August. They worked with children in new work areas under Bob Bailey, director of missions. Team members (left to right) are: Pam Swader, Tommy Purvis, Ben Pharr, Catina Morris, Erin Watson, Kresta Gain, Carla Purvis, Brandon Pharr, Debbie Pharr, Lydia Purvis, and Carrie Morris. Not pictured is Dorian Purvis.

Parkway Church, Clinton, will host a concert by One Voice at 6 p.m. in Nelson Hall on the MC campus Oct. 2. One Voice, an auditioned ensemble sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Church Music Department, is directed by Graham Smith. Ken Anderson is pastor, Parkway.



Announces three new tours for 1994!

Gatlinburg Fall Foliage

Oct. 11-13 \$269

Branson at Christmas

Nov. 10-13 \$349

Gatlinburg at Christmas

Nov. 18-20 \$254

Also booking 1995 Bahamas and Alaskan cruises!!

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Christian entertainment

For information, reservations, and brochures, contact Becky or Marie at Christian Tours, Inc. 1-800-505-8687

Daniel Vestal, pastor of Tallwood Church, Houston, Texas, will be keynote speaker for the annual meeting of the Mississippi Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF). The meeting will be held Oct. 8 at First Church, Leland. The son of a Southern Baptist evangelist, Vestal was the first moderator for the CBF.



Vestal

Magee's Creek Church, Jayess, will observe high attendance day Oct. 2, beginning with Sunday School at 10 a.m. The 6 p.m. service will feature singing by "Obadiah," and an appreciation dinner for all church workers will follow at 7. Max Parris is pastor.

The Baptist Student Union of Pearl River Community College, Poplarville, will host a gospel concert Oct. 1, 2-4 p.m., on the lawn of the Baptist Student Center. A love offering will be taken to help retire the debt on the BSU's new building. Featured singers will be "Revived," the "Gospeltones," and Michael Ball. Barbecue chicken dinners will be available for \$6. For more information or dinner reservations, call the BSU at (601) 795-8581.

The Alaska Baptist Convention seeks a new executive director. Suggested nominations or inquiries should be mailed prior to Nov. 1 to: Tim Clark, Search Committee Chairman, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 2689, Palmer, AK 99645.

First Church, Byhalia, recently hosted a joint worship service with members of its newly-created Spanish ministry and First Hispanic Baptist Church of Memphis. Byhalia pastor Glenn Bien and Memphis pastor Jose Zepeda planned the fellowship service. The Byhalia Spanish ministry meets each Sunday, beginning at 9:30 a.m., under the guidance of William Reinhardt of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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OZARK MOUNTAIN CHRISTMAS.

Nov. 16-19, 4 days/3 nights in Branson: SHOJI, Roy Clark, DINO Shows, luxury lodging, motor coach. Holiday Magic at Silver Dollar City, spectacular light displays. \$315 per person. Happy Trails Tours (601) 372-1348.

YOUTH GROUPS NEEDED in

Atlanta, Orlando, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, Toronto, Buffalo for 1995 summer mission projects. We provide meals, lodg-

ing, assignment. For more information, costs, call Dr. Harry Fowler, Youth on Mission, Box 2095, Rocky Mount, NC 27802 (919) 985-4499.

ORGAN, TWIN KEYBOARD, full

size cabinet, bench. Excellent condition. Individual, small church. Mrs. Houser 4942 Brookwood Place, Jackson, MS 39212.

GRAND PIANO, WALNUT finish.

6 ft., excellent condition, Hyundai. (601) 783-2422.

WOODLAND BAPTIST CHURCH,

Columbus, Miss., seeks Minister of Music/Youth. If interested, contact: Woodland Baptist Church, 3033 Ridge Road, Columbus, MS 39701; call (601) 327-6689/7432.

Reality of Cuban life impacts youths

Three Baptist youths from the United States spent two weeks in Cuba in August taking part in a conference for Baptist and Mennonite young people. They say it is an experience that haunts them.

"The level of poverty astounded me. I've never seen poverty like that before," said Courtney Walsh, 18, who has viewed the ravages of poverty in her hometown of Memphis, and on a trip to the former Soviet Union.

Jessica Sehested, also 18 and from Memphis, reported that in Matanzas, the local zoo had to be closed after the people were forced to eat the animals to survive.

The three students — Walsh, Sehested, and Leigh Anne Yow, 22, of Raleigh, N.C. — were sponsored by the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America to attend the conference co-hosted by the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center and Ebenezer Baptist Church in

Marianao, Cuba. Youth from across Latin America participated in the gathering with devotions, Bible studies, sermons, lectures, and sightseeing.

Sehested said for her, the impact of her trip was still sinking in. "I can leave Cuba, but the people I visited with have to stay there, struggling to find food every day. How do they wake up each day and go about their lives knowing they might not eat that day?"

"While I learned to value things in my country, I was often filled with rage because the U.S. government has the power to help — or at the very least to stop hurting — these people," said Walsh. "Our economic embargo has strangled the people of Cuba.... The Cubans with whom I spoke, particularly the Cuban Baptists, had difficulty understanding why we in this country would want to inflict suffering on them simply to make a political point."

Since 1961, the U.S. has enforced an economic embargo against Cuba, prohibiting the sale of merchandise, industrial goods, and gasoline as well as humanitarian

goods like medicine, food, and Bibles.

Travel between the two countries has been restricted. The embargo has been condemned by such bodies as the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the American Baptist Churches, the Progressive National Baptist Convention, and the Baptist World Alliance.

Yow said the greatest lesson she has learned is the link between politics and spirituality. "When I first went to Cuba, I knew about the embargo, but I really wasn't concerned with it. I was more concerned with what it's like to be a Christian in Cuba. When I got there and saw the impact politics made, it made me realize faith is important, but so is (the political situation) because politics affects peoples' lives."

Walsh noticed differences between being a Christian in the U.S. and being a Christian in Cuba.

"What does it mean to be a Christian in the U.S.? Going to church every Sunday and giving 10% of your income once a month to the church? Coming to Sunday School or working in a soup kitchen?" Walsh questioned.

"And what does it mean to be a Christian in Cuba? It means that you share with your neighbor your single candle when a petroleum shortage makes the electricity go out. It means giving your shoes to the little girl next door because her feet are covered with cuts and calluses. A Christian in Cuba spends half of his \$2 per month income to buy cough medicine for the elderly woman in his church."

— Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America staff report.

Thursday, September 29, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Revival Dates

Siloam, West Point: Oct. 9, homecoming; 11 a.m. service; covered dish lunch, noon; Walter Frederick, West Point, guest speaker; revival through Oct. 12; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; J.B. Miller, Brentwood, Tenn., evangelist; Eugene May, music; David Bishop, pastor.

Parkhill, Jackson: Oct. 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch in fellowship hall; 7 nightly; Jim Chance, music; Tim Roaten, pastor, preaching.

New Hope (Leake): Oct. 9,

homecoming; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11; lunch in fellowship hall, noon; Carlton Jones, Madden, guest speaker; revival through Oct. 12; 7 nightly; Larry Duncan, evangelist; Duncan Sisters, music; Bobby Barfoot, pastor.

McAdams (Attala): Oct. 9-12; Sunday, homecoming; 10 a.m. Sunday School; worship, 11; revival begins 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Thomas Knight, Kosciusko, evangelist; Jimmy Sledge, Kosciusko, music; Jimmy Kettleman, pastor.

Homecomings

Spring Hill, Waterford: Oct. 9; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, noon; afternoon sing, 1 p.m.; no night service; Glory Bound quartet, Holly Springs, music; Paul Middleton, pastor, speaker.

McIvor (Panola): Oct. 2; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11; pot luck lunch, noon; afternoon service with the Praisemen singers, 1:30; Robert Smith Jr., interim pastor.

Mt. Pisgah, Enid: Oct. 9; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11; dinner in fellowship hall; music, 1:15 p.m.; Ken Pegram, guest speaker; Raymond Jeffcoat, pastor.

Weathersby, Mendenhall: Oct. 2; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11; lunch, noon; afternoon sing; R.A. Tullos, retired DOM, guest speaker; Foy Killingsworth, pastor.

Riverside, Money, celebrates 75th

Riverside Church, Money, will celebrate its 75th anniversary on Oct. 9.

On Saturday, Oct. 8, the church will hold a 7 p.m. supper in its annex.

On Sunday the 9th, activities begin with Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., followed by worship at 11; a noon lunch; a concert at 2 p.m. with Ronnie Cheeck, Sybil Hadson, Evelyn Hollis, Amy and Gail Minga, Tonie Storey, and Gina Turner.

A volleyball game at 3:30 will conclude the homecoming celebration.

Preston Kelly is pastor.

New Hope, Gulf Coast, notes 50

New Hope Church, Gulfport, will mark its 50th anniversary on Sunday, Oct. 2.

Sunday School will begin at 9:30; worship service at 10:30; and a covered dish lunch in the fellowship hall at noon. An afternoon sing will follow the luncheon. There will be no night service.

Glenn Morgan of Arkansas will be speaker for the day. William Lynn Chapuis is pastor.

HERE'S HOPE. SHARE JESUS NOW. KICK-OFF EVENT

In the churches of Mississippi

WITNESS COMMITMENT DAY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1994

Individuals in the churches committing to bear a verbal witness to lost persons for 60 consecutive days.

JANUARY 9-MARCH 9, 1995

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Matthew 9:38

For information regarding "Here's Hope" contact:

Evangelism Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0530
Telephone: 1-800-748-1651



LifeAnswers

Ron Humber, Ed.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Memories of my abortion a few years ago still haunt me. Where did my baby go? Does he hate me? Does God hate me? I've asked for forgiveness, but I still have nightmares.

I am envious of people who know God's will without a doubt. I pray and read my Bible every day, but I struggle. There has to be an easier way!

Your feelings and questions are very common among women who have had an abortion. The answers are in God's hands, but it is obvious that you are grieving the loss of your child and the Bible encourages us to grieve as those who have hope (1 Thess. 4:13). Remember that 1 John 1:9 also applies to you: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (NIV). The nightmares are a continuation of your grief and guilt. Read your Bible or a good devotional book before going to bed. When you have a nightmare, wake up and just begin praying. Join a support group where you can talk to others hurting like you (contact a crisis pregnancy center to find such a group). Finally, let me encourage you to get involved in the pro-life movement. By helping other women struggling with an abortion decision and praying for them, you can give of yourself to help others. Read Luke 6:38.

I believe all Christians struggle to know God's will. The more we try to do God's will, the greater the struggle. James 1:2-3 says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (NIV). Paul tells us in Philippians 2:12, "... Continue to work out your faith with fear and trembling" (NIV). In these passages, we see that knowing God's will and doing right is something for which we must work and persevere. It may appear that others know God's will without a doubt, but this is not true for everyone. Some people struggle in private, but all of us are called upon to work at our salvation — to seek, ask, and knock. Sometimes God does not answer as quickly as we like, and therefore it seems we have to work hard to know his will. Don't give up. Keep your eyes on Jesus and you will come to the end of your race with the answers for which you are searching.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: In time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

EEOC pulls harassment guidelines, eases religion struggle

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has withdrawn proposed guidelines on workplace harassment in response to congressional orders and widespread public protest of their potential impact on religious expression.

When the commissioners recently voted 3-0 to pull the guidelines, it ended for the time being a controversial battle which began with their proposal in October 1993. When concerns were raised about their effect on religious freedom on the job, the EEOC received more than 100,000 comments in four months' time, the largest volume in the agency's history.

In August, Congress passed legislation directing the EEOC to remove religion as a category from the guidelines. The commission's response was to withdraw the entire guidelines.

The public protest and overwhelming Senate opposition

"helped the EEOC to decide that these one-size-fits-all harassment guidelines were not a very good idea — at least not right now, just before election time," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Christian Life Commission (CLC).

"But there's always next year. The EEOC will be back, no doubt, with new proposed guidelines. Our view is that Title VII (of the 1964 Civil Rights Act) already protects employees from religious discrimination in the workplace, and we would rather not invite the EEOC to enumerate what religious speech is acceptable or unacceptable to Caesar. Religious liberty watchdogs must keep barking that we won't accept Caesar's muzzle in the workplace," Whitehead said.

Sen. Howell Heflin, D.-Ala., who led congressional opposition to religion's inclusion in the rules, also welcomed the EEOC decision.

"The EEOC's move indicates that, once and for all, these guidelines will 'rest in peace,'" Heflin said in a prepared statement. "I credit the American people for seeing the importance of this issue and responding with a record-breaking number of comments to the EEOC."

The CLC and other organizations charged the inclusion of religion in the proposed rules would result in a ban on religious expression on the job, largely because of

employers' fear of lawsuits. The guidelines, which also covered race, color, gender, national origin, age, and disability, could have resulted in harassment charges against employees or employers for witnessing to fellow workers or subordinates, or for displaying religious art or literature, the CLC and others warned.

Messengers to the annual June SBC meeting in Orlando approved a resolution requesting removal of religion from the guidelines and

separate handling of rules on religious discrimination.

Groups such as the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, the National Council of Churches, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State called for retention of religion in the guidelines but said revisions should be made by the EEOC to protect religious expression.

Strode is director of media & news information, Washington office, CLC.

Just for the Record

LAS CRUCES, N.M. (BP) — C. Eugene Whitlow, 82, editor emeritus of the Baptist New Mexican, died Sept. 18 at Memorial Medical Center in Las Cruces. He was editor of the Baptist New Mexican from 1967-81. Whitlow is survived by his wife; a son, Eugene; a daughter, Ceci Ingram of Trumbull, Conn.; a granddaughter and a grandson.

Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto, will hold a dedication service for its new building on Oct. 2 at 10:45 a.m. A special building fund offering will be taken during the morning worship service. From 2-4 p.m., there will be an

open house and reception. Gary Sloan is pastor.

The Mississippi College Department of Music will present two of its faculty members in a free recital Oct. 6 at 8:15 p.m. in Aven Auditorium. Nell Adams will sing a selection of Broadway shows tunes, accompanied by James Sclater on piano.

The Laurel Life Chain will be observed Sunday, Oct. 2 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. on Highway 15 North, in concert with Life Chain events across the state of Mississippi. For more information about the event in Laurel, call (601) 425-3838.

Baptist Women/Young Women head to Oxford

The 1994 Baptist Women/Baptist Young Women Retreat will be held Oct. 7-8 at Camp Lake Stephens near Oxford. Theme for the retreat is "A Time to Grow."

Nan Sugg, missionary to Taiwan; Kay Brown, missionary nurse in Colombia; and Judy Edwards, former home missionary to the Navajo Indians will be on hand to share their respective mission field experiences with attendees.

Friday evening, there will be specialty conferences, testimonies, and music led by Deborah Sanders and Melissa Alexander of Oxford, Martha Kate Phillips of Calhoun City, and Donna Brown of Big Creek.

Cost for the retreat is \$25 per person. Registration will begin at 4 p.m. on Oct. 7. The retreat will conclude after lunch on Oct. 8.

Deadline for reservations is Oct. 3. For more information, contact Ashley McCaleb at the Woman's Missionary Union of the

Mississippi Baptist Convention, (800) 748-1651 or (601) 968-3800.

Drivers Flat celebrates 125 years

Drivers Flat Church, Water Valley, will celebrate its 125th anniversary Oct. 9.

There will be no Sunday School. Worship service will begin at 10 a.m. Roy Wilson will be the guest speaker. A covered dish lunch will be served at noon. Following lunch, former members and pastors will be asked to share memories of their time with the congregation.

An address by John Stewart will close the day.

Edward Pendergrast is pastor.

HEALTHCARE

FOR THE RECORD

Baptist offers help with the day-to-day issues of life.

Introducing the Samaritan Counseling Center.

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center now combines theology and psychology to offer a unique new counseling facility: The Samaritan Counseling Center.

This new center is designed for people who wish to emphasize Christian values as part of their overall well-being. "Our purpose is to address issues much like any other therapist would, but with a consideration of spiritual matters as well," said Dr. Barry Click, center director.

"Pastoral counseling is dedicated to the healing of the mind and the spirit," said Dr. Paul Stephenson, director of MBMC's pastoral care department. "We offer programs for persons who desire counseling that is both clinically competent and rooted in Christian faith."

Confidential counseling is available for a variety of problems encountered in today's demanding world, including:

- Dating
- Depression
- Divorce
- Marriage enrichment
- Sexual dysfunction
- Stress and anxiety

- Family conflict
- Career assessment
- Parenting

The center's staff is trained to counsel adults, adolescents and children, as well as offer psychological testing and psychiatric testing in consultation with the MBMC medical staff. Counseling services are non-denominational in nature and are open to the general public.

In addition, counseling programs will be offered in churches throughout the greater Jackson area, to expand the opportunity to receive Christian-based counseling in a comfortable, familiar setting.

Located in MBMC, the new service is the first accredited Samaritan Counseling Center in Mississippi. As such, it will provide educational training, graduate-level practicums and internships for counseling students.

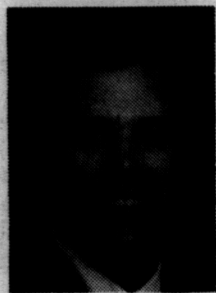
If you'd like a complete listing of the services offered or wish to schedule a time to meet with a pastoral counselor, please call us at 968-5146 for more information.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

We're healthcaring for the whole family.

Uniform Consequences of choice



By Richard Bradley
Judges 2

How often as children did we hear the words "you can't say you weren't warned" from our parents? Pretty often! I suspect about as many times as we have said those very same words to our own children. What our parents wanted us to know and what we want our own children to know is that there are always consequences to our actions, both good and bad.

God warned his people that there would be some pretty unpleasant consequences in store for them if they neglected their responsibilities to him after entering the promised land. In the wilderness, in the struggle of it all, it was relatively easy to be faithful. The people were utterly dependent upon God for everything that sustained life. Once in the promised land, the people would be tempted to forget God because they would be living in homes which they had not built and reaping the fruits of fields and vineyards they had not planted. Forget God; they did. Reap the consequences of their rebellion; they did.

The Israelites turned from worshiping God to worship Baal and Ashteroth (vv. 11-13). The Canaanite god most often referred to in the Old Testament is Baal, which means "lord" or "master." This word could be used as a title for any person who owned something, or any god considered to be a lord or master. But the word Baal soon became identified with various regional gods that were thought to provide fertility for crops and livestock. The worship of Baal was often attended to with much sensuality and immorality (Num. 22:41; Judges 2:13; 1 Kings 16:31-32).

Asherah or Ashtoreth was a female Canaanite deity often portrayed as the wife of El (or sometimes Baal). Asherah was a favorite deity of women. Some of the wives of David and Solomon worshiped her (1 Kings 15:13), as Ahab's wife, Jezebel, also probably did (1 Kings 16:31-33). The word *asherah* also refers to a wooden pole, or cult pillar, that stood at Canaanite places of worship — perhaps the trunk of a tree with the branches chopped off — and associated with the worship of the goddess Asherah.

God delivered the Israelites into the hands of oppressors (vv. 14-15). Unlike his people, God always keeps his word. What he promises, he must do. Under his protective care, God had set a hedge of protection about his people. He had provided for them and protected them from enemies. However, because of their rebellion, that hedge was taken away and their enemies were given license to plunder and oppress the people of God. The Bible says in v. 15 that the people were "distressed" because of their sin. Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionary tells us that this word means "to press in." The people were literally "hemmed in" or "in dire straits" because of their sin.

In response to the people's groanings, God raised up judges to deliver them from their oppressors (vv. 16-18). These verses represent a pretty good summary of the era of the judges. The judges were not mere legal representatives who settled disputes among the people. The judges were handpicked by God to lead the people of Israel in a time of spiritual renewal and military deliverance.

It is sad to note that the people never did learn their lessons very well. Once saved and safe from the hand of their oppressors, the people would turn back to their old sinful ways. Their further rebellion would then cause the cycle of sin, oppression, and deliverance to begin all over again.

When a judge died, the Israelites again worshiped other gods and stubbornly followed their own way (v. 19). Under the terms of their covenant relationship with God, the Lord was to have exclusive rights to the devotion of his people. The judges were faithful to remind the people of their obligations to God which they had not been keeping. However, once God's representative passed off the scene the people would go back to their sinful practices and worship of other gods.

Because of his holiness, God cannot abide sin indefinitely. He is longsuffering but even the patience of God has its limits. This is a lesson the people never did seem to quite grasp. How well have we learned the lesson?

Bradley is pastor, Handsboro Church, Gulfport.

Bible Book God's redemptive purpose



By Raymond Kolb
Ephesians 1

W.O. Carver called this letter to the Ephesians "the greatest piece of writing in all history." As was the custom at that time, the writer identified himself at the beginning of the letter. Just the name, Paul, would have been sufficient for most of the recipients of the letter to know exactly who was writing. But Paul was burdened. He had an urgent message for fellow Christians, and especially for those who were Gentiles rather than Jews. He wanted all of them to realize that this was not just a friendly letter from their friend Paul. He wanted them to see this as a message from God through a legitimate apostle of Jesus Christ. This was not an honor he had chosen for himself. It was "by the will of God." It was extremely important that his apostleship be recognized in order that this urgent message be accepted as coming from God and from the risen, living Lord Jesus Christ who had appeared to him personally.

"To the saints in Ephesus." Though the words "in Ephesus" appear in most of the ancient manuscripts of this letter, they are absent from at least two of the oldest ones. This may have been a circular letter intended for a number of different churches. The name of each of those churches may have been inserted in copies intended for them. Certainly one was intended for the Ephesian church. Maybe you would like to think of a copy being intended for your church and apply its teachings to your church as you study the letter.

The letter is addressed to "saints." Saints are people who have been separated by God for himself, and who have separated, or committed themselves, personally to him. In the New Testament sense, all Christians are "saints" now. It is not a special classification for a few after death.

"Grace" (unmerited favor, goodwill, loving kindness, joy) and "peace" (calmness, a sense of well-being, absence of fear or worry). May these be yours from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's redemptive purpose as Father (vv. 3-6). As Paul thinks of God's great plan for us, which he is about to discuss, he is so full of joy that he begins with an outburst of praise to God the Father who blessed us with every blessing which is of a spiritual nature. One who is in Christ can experience something of the heavenly kind of blessing even while here (v. 3). From eternity God has had a great redemptive plan which is now being carried out. He chose us even before the world was created so that he might set us apart for himself and take away our guilt. He, not we, has taken the initiative in bringing us to himself (v. 4). For those who respond to his choice, are set apart, and are made blameless in his sight, there is more. Just because of his love, and in keeping with his own pleasure, he adopts us as sons in his own family (v. 5). "To the praise of his glorious grace" (v. 6) is an expression of gratitude and praise, to be repeated in verses 12 and 14.

God's redemptive purpose as Son (vv. 7-12). In Jesus Christ we have our redemption (we are set free) through his blood (his sacrifice), our sins are forgiven (our guilt is taken away). All of this is because of God's goodwill toward us and not because we deserve it (vv. 7-8). Something about God's eternal will had been hidden before but has now been revealed. He has a great purpose which will be achieved at exactly the right time. He will "bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ" (v. 10). He included both in heaven and on earth. God has a plan to make this happen and he has chosen us to be a part of that plan (v. 11). In verse 12 Paul continues "in order that we (Jews, represented by Paul), who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory." "And you (Gentiles) also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (v. 13a).

God's redemptive purpose as Holy Spirit (vv. 13b-14). "Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (v. 13b). He is the guarantee that our complete inheritance, or complete salvation, is secure while we wait and are used by him to reach others who are to be part of his possession.

Kolb is a retired missionary living in Clinton.

Life and Work Master Designer, design



By Ruth Allen
Genesis 1 & 2

Sir Isaac Newton, the man who discovered and named the law of gravity, had a complete scale model made of the solar system. The sun was in the center, and the planets revolved around it. A friend, a non-Christian scientist, came to visit Newton. His scientist friend was amazed when he walked in and saw the model. As he walked slowly around the model, the scientist whistled appreciatively and looked at Newton with a broad smile. "This is exquisite! Who made it?" he asked.

Newton looked over the rim of his glasses. "Nobody," he said, as the corner of his mouth twitched. Newton's friend chuckled.

"Come on," he said, "I'm no fool! Somebody had to make this model, and he must have been a genius."

Newton replied, "You think you are no fool, but sometimes I wonder. This thing is just a puny imitation of a grander system whose laws you and I both know. Somehow I cannot convince you that this model had no maker. Yet you believe the original, from which this design was taken, simply appeared and runs on its own — without design or maker. How you reach such a conclusion escapes me!"

Teachers of humanism would have people believe, as did Newton's friend, that the universe and mankind originated without a divine source. Humanism is diametrically opposed to the teaching of God's Word. The enlightened Christian assuredly knows that the universe was created by the hand of the Almighty God.

God alone is the Master Designer of the entire universe! God spoke, and the universe came into existence. God keeps the world on its course; and at God's appointed time, God will speak the world out of existence.

God has created an orderly universe (1:1-4). Jesus taught people to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11). This is to remind us that people may trace the bread on their tables back through the grocer, the baker, the miller, the farmer, and ultimately to God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father" (James 1:17). According to the orderly pattern established by the Master Designer, God has given the soil, rain, and the seasons to sustain life upon the earth.

God has chosen to make people the crown of his creation (1:26-27). God faithfully discharged his duties as Lord of creation and has never once abandoned his people to cope alone with the complexities of life. When a Roman penny was made, the image or likeness of Caesar, the emperor, was stamped upon it. Those who used the coins were his subjects and obeyed his laws. Ages ago God designed something and stamped his likeness upon it. The likeness was God's sign of ownership. It was not a coin that God made; it was mankind! God's image stamped upon man signified his design was not for mankind to pursue pleasure but to serve God.

In The Gospel of Redemption, W.T. Conner reminds us that: 1. We must always remember God is personal and purposive. 2. The historical order is the scene of the working of the plan of God. 3. God is working through Christ and his church a redemptive program in the world. Conner further states, "Creation and redemption form one plan with God. Creation was for redemptive ends. Redemption was not an afterthought on God's part. He did not make the world and have it wrecked by sin and then go to work to salvage something out of the wreck. His plan was a unified plan from the beginning. Creation looked toward redemption, and redemption is to be the goal and climax of creation."

In an undergraduate course on the Art of Stagecraft, the final exam required a watercolor set design for the play, "Arsenic and Old Lace." Although a satisfactory grade was received, the set was truly the work of an amateur! God's master design for the universe and mankind was an unequalled accomplishment. God's workmanship is beyond comparison. Consequently, as God is unique as Master Designer, so mankind; his crown of creation, is unique. All people are made in God's image and are the objects of God's redemption. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

Allen lives in Jackson.

capsules

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS FIND GAZA HAPPIER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK: GAZA — Once again, it's OK to laugh and play in Gaza. The hope that flooded in after Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat recently took the reins of power in Gaza has spilled over into the lives of Palestinians with whom Baptists work. Southern Baptist missionaries Dean and Dona Fitzgerald came to the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip in 1978. That was nine years before Palestinians launched an uprising against Israeli rule called the Intifada — and before Gaza City grew so bleak and barren because of it. Now the Intifada — directed at the Israeli military occupation — is no longer necessary. Conditions are even better than before the Intifada began, Dona Fitzgerald said. Personal freedom and a new burst of energy translate into opportunity for the Gaza Baptist Church, a vibrant group of believers whose numbers have grown from recent weekend revival services. The church is looking for an Arab pastor. Its membership number about 30, but the church's reach extends far beyond that. To strengthen the Baptist witness, Southern Baptist representatives are requesting new full-time co-workers — preachers and an English teacher — from churches in the United States. They're also asking for a teacher to make a career out of training teachers at a school for the hearing-impaired. The Baptists believe the worst is over in Gaza — at least for a time.

AUTHOR OF NEW SBC HISTORY BOOK SEES A PEOPLE OF FAITH AND HOPE: ABILENE, Texas (BP) — Southern Baptists, "for all their biases and weaknesses, are a people of faith and hope," the author of the sesquicentennial history of the Southern Baptist Convention has concluded. Jesse C. Fletcher, chancellor and Connally professor of missions at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, has written *The Southern Baptist Convention, A Sesquicentennial History* published by Broadman & Holman Publishers and released in September. "The history is the way we were and how we got to be who we are," Fletcher said in an interview. The 467-page narrative includes one chapter titled "The Battle for the Gavel, 1979-90," detailing the denomination's "conservative resurgence" beginning with the election of Adrian Rogers as SBC president in June 1979. He described that event as "not the end of a campaign, but the beginning of one," adding: "It soon became obvious this controversy would be different from anything Southern Baptists had experienced." The book is available through Baptist Book Stores at a special introductory price of \$23.97 through Dec. 31. After Jan. 1, the price will be \$29.99. It may be purchased at the stores or by calling 1-800-233-1123.

FIRST SIMULTANEOUS WITNESS EFFORT TO LAUNCH OCT. 2: ATLANTA (BP) — Sunday, Oct. 2, is "Evangelize the Lost Launch Day" to prepare for Southern Baptists' first simultaneous personal soul-winning effort. "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" is the theme of the witnessing emphasis scheduled Jan. 9 to March 9 next year. Southern Baptists are asked to share their faith at least 60 times in those 60 days, said Thad Hamilton, Home Mission Board director of personal evangelism and co-chairman of the Here's Hope national steering committee. On Oct. 2, pastors are asked to commit to the spring project, Hamilton said. Church members are asked to sign up Oct. 9. People are encouraged to commit to the project in October to allow time for witness training, he said. Southern Baptists have had simultaneous revivals, but never attempted a concurrent effort for individuals to share their faith, Hamilton said. The personal witnessing thrust will be followed by revivals from March 12 to Sept. 30. The revivals will "capture the momentum" created by 60 days of soul-winning and give new Christians a chance to make their decision public, said Richard Harris, HMB director of mass evangelism and Here's Hope co-chairman.



Super day for Monroe GAs

Monroe Association GAs met recently for a "Super Saturday" at Athens Church, Aberdeen. The 33 GAs and their leaders played games and watched a video on the work of the Ortiz family in migrant ministries. Elizabeth McNeese is Monroe Association GA director.

Participants find friendship at Fall Festival of Marriage

The Baptist Record was invited to be the guest of the Baptist Sunday School Board for the Fall Festival of Marriage held at the New Orleans Seminary Sept. 16-18. Theme for this year's festival was "Husbands and Wives: The Best of Friends." The following is the first in a series of observations of the weekend by Record staffer Shannon Simpson.

Day 1: Friday afternoon. My husband Ellis and I are — naturally — late getting out of town. Last minute trips to bank and gas station take longer than we thought. Finally on the road to New Orleans, I fall asleep in the car, beat after a long week.

When I wake up, we are nearly to Slidell. I say to Ellis, "Some way to start off a romantic anniversary weekend, huh?"



Steve and Patti Gabrielse, worship leaders for the Fall Festival of Marriage on the New Orleans Seminary campus, perform a skit portraying a couple's friendship from childhood through maturity.

After checking in at the hotel in New Orleans East, we head to the New Orleans Seminary campus. I've never been there before, so this whole thing is a real adventure.

After registration, we sit down with a cup of coffee in Hardin Student Center and go through our packets, put on name tags, etc.

A brochure lists 33 possible workshops we can attend in any of five time slots through Sunday morning. Overwhelmed, we decide the best strategy is process of elimination.

"Hope for Victims of Sexual Abuse," "Moving to Maturity," and "Staying Friends with your



Teenager" are not for us, but I am glad to see there are workshops for those particular needs. I am also glad to learn there is confidential counseling available on Saturday for individuals and couples.

Since this weekend had been dubbed a time for the two of us (and not just a work trip for me), we decide against anything designated "For Men (or Women) Only." We narrow our choices down to a range of topics — stress, anger, forgiveness, sex, affirmation, communication — and decide we'll let the time slots dictate which ones we actually attend.

Friday evening. By the time we drink our coffee, the first general session is beginning in Leavell Chapel. After a welcome by seminary President Landrum Leavell, Lloyd Sweatt steps to the microphone. He is pastor of Duck Hill Church near Grenada.

I realize when he introduces his wife Rita that she is the daughter of J.M. and Gail Wood. J.M. is retiring minister of music at Broadmoor Church, Jackson; Gail works with me in the Baptist Building. The Sweatts served as weekend coordinators for the festival. That means they worked out all the details while I had a good time.

Lloyd awards a book to the couple who came farthest to attend: David and Mary Sills, Mississippi missionaries on furlough from Quito, Ecuador. What a great way to start a leave, I think.

Steve Gabrielse of Kansas City plays hymns on the trumpet. Steve and his wife Patti will be worship leaders. They sing, lead music, and illustrate friendship and pitfalls in marriage with short drama vignettes during each general session throughout the weekend. With the first short drama, Ellis is

impressed. Me, too. It's powerful stuff.

We also meet keynote speakers Bob and Yvonne Turnbull of Mission Viejo, Calif. They have a full-time ministry of marriage enrichment, and contribute to several national singles publications. They reiterate goals of the weekend: reveal why it's important to have your best friend in your spouse, show couples how to become best friends, and teach ways to stay best friends.

They talk of the marital struggles they have overcome.

"Opposites attract, then they attack," Yvonne Turnbull says this is one of the hidden rules of marriage. Ellis and I look at each other. I can tell he's laughing inside, too. That could be us!

The Turnbells say: "We have to remember, when God put that person who is so different from you into your life, it was to help you grow more like Christ. In order to make the marriage work, you have to start by changing yourself — not always looking to change the other person."

They point out Jesus said something like that in Matthew 7:3-5.

(to be continued)



Yvonne and Bob Turnbull tell couples how to build and maintain lifelong friendship in their marriages. The Turnbells, from Mission Viejo, Calif., were keynote speakers for the Fall Festival of Marriage in New Orleans, Sept. 16-18.

Bibliocipher

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ITT BPM EIGA WN I UIV IZM KTMIV QV PQA
WEV MGMA; JCB BPM TWZL EMQOPMBP BPM
AXQZQBA.

XZWDMZJA AQFBMMV:BEW

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Matthew Eleven: Twenty-Eight.

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